

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4241

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OCON, AFIN, IMCO

SUBJECT: IMCO - INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MARINE

POLLUTION, LONDON, OCTOBER 8 - NOVEMBER 2

REF: (A) STATE 188823

(B) COLWELL/ODELL TELECON

1. WE UNDERSTAND FROM REF TELECON THAT WORD WAS OMITTED FROM FIRST SENTENCE, PARA 4, REFTEL, INDICATING THAT TRADITIONAL USDEL RECEPTION AT SUBJECT CONFERENCE IS TO BE CANCELLED. EMBASSY BELIEVES CANCELLATION OF US-HOSTED RECEPTION WOULD BE A MISTAKE, AND WE URGE RECONSIDERATION OF DECISION.

2. WE ASSUME ARGUMENT FOR CANCELLATIOH RESTS LARGELY ON HEAVY COST INVOLVED AND BELIEF THAT SCARCE REPRESENTATION FUNDS CAN BE USED MORE EFFECTIVELY FOR SMALLER, MORE SELECTIVE REPRESENTATION FUNCTIONS SUCH AS WORKING LUNCHEONS AND DINNERS. THERE IS CONSIDERABLE VALIDITY TO THIS ARGUMENT, AND WE WOULD AGREE THAT QUESTION OF CONTINUATION OF US PRACTICE OF HOSTING RECEPTIONS AT FUTURE IMCO ASSEMBLIES AND CONFERENCES SHOULD BE SUBJECT TO CLOSE SCRUTINY ON COST/BENEFIT BASIS. WE DO NOT REPEAT NOT, HOWEVER, BELIEVE THAT CRITICALLY IMPORTANT MARINE POLLUTION CONFERENCE SHOULD BE THE OCCASION FOR A BREAK WITH LONG-STANDING US PRACTICE.

3. US HAS BEEN PRIMARY DRIVING FORCE BEHIND CAREFUL,
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DELIBERATE EFFORT TO BRING ABOUT INTERNATIONAL CONFER-

ENCE ON MARINE POLLUTION. WE HAVE, THEREFORE, A PARTICULARLY STRONG INTEREST IN SEEING THAT CONFERENCE IS A SUCCESS. TRADITIONAL SOCIAL FORMALITIES SUCH AS RECEPTIONS HELD DURING EARLY DAYS OF CONFERENCE CONTRIBUTE IMPORTANTLY TOWARD ESTABLISHMENT OF CONSTRUCTIVE WORKING ENVIRONMENT WHICH IS ESSENTIAL FOR CONFERENCE SUCCESS. DELEGATIONS HAVE BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO EXPECT A US-HOSTED RECEPTION ON THIRD DAY OF IMCO ASSEMBLIES AND CONFERENCES FOLLOWING THE TRADITIONAL IMCO RECEPTION ON FIRST DAY AND HOST GOVERNMENT RECEPTION ON SECOND DAY. A BREAK WITH THIS U.S. TRADITION WILL NOT GO UNNOTICED AND IS LIKELY TO GIVE RISE TO SPECULATION CONCERNING REASONS BEHIND IT. SUCH SPECULATION COULD BE EXPLOITED TO OUR DISADVANTAGE BY THOSE COUNTRIES WHICH OPPOSE CONFERENCE ON MARINE POLLUTION IN IMCO CONTEXT.

4. A U.S. RECEPTION FOR APPROXIMATELY 300 GUESTS AND USING EMBASSY FACILITIES WOULD COST LESS THAN \$1000 (EMBASSY CATERING SERVICE CAN ARRANGE RECEPTION FOR 1 POUND 30 PENCE A HEAD). THIS WOULD LEAVE OVER \$300 AVAILABLE FOR SMALLER REPRESENTATION FUNCTIONS TO BE HELD AT LATER STAGES IN CONFERENCE. WE BELIEVE THIS USE OF MODEST REPRESENTATION FUNDS CONSTITUTES SAFER COURSE TO FOLLOW FOR THIS CONFERENCE AT WHICH U.S. STAKE IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT.

5. IF U.S. RECEPTION IS TO BE HELD, WE MUST KNOW ASAP IN ORDER REINSTATE OCT. 10, THIRD DAY OF CONFERENCE, AS U.S. DATE ON CONFERENCE SOCIAL CALENDAR. PLEASE ADVISE.

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